

OUTGOING MESSAGE

Approved For Release 2004/06/14 : CIA-RDP80R01720R000400100012-0

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| 2 | 5 | 8 |
| 3 | 6 | 9 |

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CLASSIFICATION

SECRET

MESSAGE HANDLING INDICATOR

STAFF

DATE-TIME GROUP

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MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

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INFO: FILE

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TO: IMMEDIATE SAIGON.4

FOR MR. GEORGE CARVER FROM MR. BOB LAYTON.4

REF:

1. THE CIA/DIA ESTIMATES OF THE OB OF COMMUNIST AND SVN COMBAT FORCES GIVEN DO NOT ACCURATELY REFLECT COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS -- ONLY AVERAGE ASSIGNED STRENGTHS IN ORGANIZED UNITS. GIVEN THE STATE OF COLLECTION AND THE FLUIDITY OF THE MILITARY SITUATION, OB DATA CAN AT BEST BE VIEWED ONLY AS A ROUGH APPROXIMATION FOR ANY POINT IN TIME. THEY WILL NOT REFLECT EITHER COMBAT LOSSES OR REPLACEMENTS IN A TIMELY MANNER. IN ADDITION, COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS WILL DEPEND LARGELY ON QUALITATIVE FACTORS THAT CANNOT BE EXPRESSED NUMERICALLY.4

2. DATA ON COMMUNIST OB ARE ALSO INSUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE SEPARATE ESTIMATES ONLY ONE MONTH APART. FOR EXAMPLE, INFORMATION RECEIVED DURING THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS INDICATES THAT TWO INFANTRY DIVISIONS FROM THE NORTH DEPLOYED INTO MRS 2 AND 3 OF SVN UNDETECTED BETWEEN LATE JANUARY AND THE FIRST OF MARCH. IN

DATE: 31 MARCH 1975
ORIG: BELAYTON
UNIT: ACTING NIO/SSEA
EXT:

RELEASING OFFICER

COORDINATING OFFICERS

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0 INDEX DISSEM BY: 25X1
0 NO INDEX
0 RETURN TO PER
0 IP FILES #

ADDITION, THE 200,000 FIGURE DOES NOT YET INCLUDE HANOI'S COMMITMENT OF AT LEAST ONE MORE INFANTRY DIVISION PLUS SEVERAL AIR DEFENSE REGIMENTS WHICH ARE NOW MOVING TOWARD SVN. UPON ARRIVAL, THESE UNITS ALONE WILL ADD ANOTHER 10,000 TROOPS TO THE ORDER OF BATTLE.4

COMMUNIST REGULAR COMBAT FORCES IN SVN:4

| | | |
|-------|-------------|-------------|
| | 28 JAN 1973 | 1 APR 19754 |
| MR 1 | 72,000 | 85,000 |
| MR 2 | 25,000 | 51,000 |
| MR 3 | 25,000 | 38,000 |
| MR 4 | 27,000 | 26,0004 |
| TOTAL | 149,000 | 200,0004 |

3. FIGURES ON GOVERNMENT COMBAT FORCES SUFFER FROM MANY OF THE SAME WEAKNESSES AS COMMUNIST STRENGTH ESTIMATES AND DO NOT PORTRAY COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS. THE MOST REVEALING GAUGE IN THE FOLLOWING TABLES OF THE RECENT DISINTEGRATION OF ARVN UNITS IS THE COMPARISON OF THE 210,000 ARVN/VNMC FORCES ON 1 MARCH 1975 WITH THE CURRENT 134,000 STRENGTH -- A DECLINE OF OVER 36 PERCENT.

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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
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SIGNAL CENTER USE ONLY
AGE COI ACP TOG TPE MRO
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PAGE OF PAGES

3

SECRET

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DATE-TIME GROUP

CITE

MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

CONF:

INFO: FILE

0 INDEX DISSEM BY:

0 NO INDEX

0 RETURN TO PER

0 IP FILES #

25X1

THE 1 APRIL ESTIMATE IS PRELIMINARY, PENDING RECEIPT OF THE MONTHLY
DAO REPORT ON THE ASSIGNED STRENGTHS OF GVN UNITS.
RVNAF REGULAR COMBAT FORCES:

28 JANUARY 1973

| | RF BTTNS. | ARVN/VNMC | TOTAL |
|-------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| MR 1 | 16,000 | 81,000 | 97,000 |
| MR 2 | 28,000 | 48,000 | 76,000 |
| MR 3 | 32,000 | 54,000 | 86,000 |
| MR 4 | 48,000 | 53,000 | 101,000 |
| TOTAL | 124,000 | 236,000 | 360,000 |

1 MARCH 1975

| | RF BTTNS. | ARVN/MARINE | TOTAL |
|-------|-----------|-------------|---------|
| MR 1 | 22,000 | 74,000 | 96,000 |
| MR 2 | 35,000 | 43,000 | 78,000 |
| MR 3 | 39,000 | 51,000 | 90,000 |
| MR 4 | 49,000 | 42,000 | 91,000 |
| TOTAL | 145,000 | 210,000 | 355,000 |

RVNAF REGULAR COMBAT FORCES:

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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| | | | | | | | | |
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SIGNAL CENTER USE ONLY
AGE COI ACP TOG TPE MRO
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PAGE 4 OF 4 PAGES

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0 INDEX DISSEM BY: 25X1
0 NO INDEX
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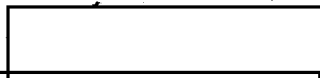
1 APRIL 1975

| | RF BTTNS. | ARVN | TOTAL |
|--------|-----------|---------|---------|
| MR 1 | - | - | - |
| MR 2 | 35,000 | 30,000 | 65,000 |
| MR 3 | 38,000 | 62,000 | 100,000 |
| MR 4 | 48,000 | 42,000 | 90,000 |
| TOTAL* | 121,000 | 134,000 | 255,000 |

{* DOES NOT INCLUDE SOME 16,000 ARVN/MARINE TROOPS REPORTEDLY EVACUATED SUCCESSFULLY FROM DANANG.}

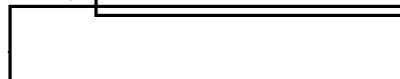
4. WE CANNOT RECREATE DAO'S 59,000 FIGURES FOR EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT COMBAT TROOPS OR THE 152,000 ASCRIBED TO THE COMMUNIST FORCES. IN GENERAL, GVN UNITS IN MR 2 ARE COMBAT INEFFECTIVE. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT MOST GVN UNITS IN MRS 3 AND 4 ARE STILL CAPABLE OF FIGHTING EFFECTIVELY. ON THE COMMUNIST SIDE VIRTUALLY ALL UNITS ARE ESTIMATED TO BE COMBAT EFFECTIVE. E2 IMPDET.H

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C/VNO



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